

The **Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls** (the Coalition) started in 1992 when a group of concerned citizens formed a statewide advocacy organization for the purpose of ensuring that girls have the opportunity to develop to their full potential. In 1993, the Coalition sponsored and helped pass the Equal Access for Girls law (ORS 417.270) in the Oregon Legislature. As a result, Oregon is the only state in the nation [with a law] that requires all state agencies providing services to children to ensure that girls have equal access to appropriate gender-specific services, treatment and facilities.



The Coalition is an all-volunteer member-driven organization dedicated to supporting the adults who empower girls and to giving girls the chance to voice their issues and needs. The Coalition is led by a fifteen-member volunteer Board of Directors; individuals and organizations from across Oregon who are passionate about gender equity for girls. The Coalition acts as a state level advocate and an education and information resource on the issues that girls face. The Coalition educates the community on behalf of girls and young women who are at risk for endangerment and disconnection.

THE MISSION OF THE COALITION IS TO ENSURE THAT GIRLS RECEIVE EQUAL ACCESS TO ALL THE APPROPRIATE GENDER-SPECIFIC SUPPORT AND SERVICES THEY NEED TO HELP THEM DEVELOP TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

THE COALITION'S WORK IS THREEFOLD: ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH

ADVOCACY: *Giving a Voice to Girls' Issues*

- Maintain advisory seats in several capacities at the state department level to ensure that the voices of girls statewide are being heard and that young women are provided equity in access to gender-responsive services and programming.
- Maintain a strong voice at the state and national levels for the needs and issues of girls and young women.
- Connect Coalition members and girls themselves to Oregon's legislators. Girls are able to tell their powerful stories face-to-face, giving lawmakers a clearer understanding of the challenges that girls face. This process also facilitates each girl's discovery of the power of her own voice.

EDUCATION: *Raising Awareness*

- Inform members and state agencies of current relevant gender-specific issues, approaches and effective gender-responsive models of proven/promising practices and services through monthly meetings and our website.
- At the national level offer resources and tools, specifically educating The National Crittenton Foundation network, to promote replication of Oregon's Equal Access legislation and educate them about the benefits of utilizing proven gender-responsive practices.

OUTREACH: *Building Positive Partnerships for Girls*

- Create an environment in Oregon (and in other states) that encourages the development of communities of support for girls and young women.
- Build/encourage statewide partnerships with organizations that can create local networks provide opportunities at the local, state and national levels to connect, share, and build relationships.
- Enhance resources to further explore and support gender-responsive practices and programs that help girls succeed.

For more information about the Coalition contact **Pam Patton, President**.
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